

Amendments to Drawings

The attached sheets of drawing figures include changes to FIGS. 1, 4, and 5. These sheets, which includes FIGS. 1 and 2, and 4, 5, and 6, respectively, replaces the original sheets including FIGS. 1 and 2, and 4, 5, and 6, respectively.

Attachments:

Replacement Sheet including FIGS. 1 and 2

Replacement Sheet including FIGS. 4, 5, and 6

REMARKS

1. Status of Claims

Claims 1-17 are in the application. Claims 1-6 and 11-17 remain in the application unchanged. Claims 7-10 are withdrawn from consideration. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1-6 and 13-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Pietzschmann (US 2002/0024354 A1 Feb. 28, 2002, now U.S. Patent 6,748,678, hereinafter "Pietzschmann").

Claims 11-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pietzschmann as applied to claims 5 and 1, and further in view of Barabi et al.

2. Drawings

The Examiner requires that the drawings include the actuator recited in claim 4 and in claim 13 or that the actuator canceled from the claims.

Actuator 12 has been added to FIGS. 1, 4, and 5. The amended FIGS. 1, 4, and 5 are attached for the Examiner's review.

Substitute formal drawing sheets including FIGS. 1 and 2, and FIGS. 3, 4, and 5 respectively are being transmitted to the Drawing Processing Branch under separate cover.

FIGS. 6 and 7 remain in application unchanged.

3. Specification

The addition of the actuator 12 to FIGS. 1, 4, and 5 necessitated the addition of mention of the reference sign --12-- in the specification when referring to the actuator. The specification has been amended accordingly.

4. Response to Claim Rejections

a. Claim 1

Applicant's Claim 1 recites:

A probe block assembly for probing a device under test (DUT), comprising:

a plurality of independent probe blocks each having a set of probes and/or receptacles that mate to a respective mating set of DUT receptacles and/or probes on said DUT;

a probe block frame which floatably holds said plurality of independent probe blocks to allow each said independent probe

block to independently float within said probe block frame relative to a predetermined position within said frame.

As described in the Applicant's specification, "[i]n a floating probe block, the probe is attached to a block which is encased in a substantially conforming frame that holds the block in place while allowing the block a small amount of "wiggle room" within the frame". (Specification, page 1, line 33 through page 2, line 2). The Applicant's claimed invention uniquely recites a floating probe block assembly with independent floating probe blocks for each probe to be inserted into the DUT. Each of the plurality of independent floating probe blocks is mounted in a single common probe block assembly frame and floats independently of the other probe blocks in the frame to allow it to directly align with its mating receptacle on the DUT." (Specification, page 2, lines 21-27). When a probe block "floats" within a frame, the probe block is allowed a certain amount of "wiggle room" to allow it to move within the frame; however, the "wiggle room" is insufficient to allow significant displacement of the independent probe blocks 50, 60 from their average position in the frame. This allows the probe blocks 50, 60 to independently "float" within the probe block frame 20." (Specification, page 6, lines 2-9).

The Examiner cites Pietzschmann as disclosing a probe block assembly for probing a device under test (DUT) as claimed in Applicant's claim 1. The Examiner seeks to equate Pietzschmann's probe card (5) as shown in FIG. 6 with Applicant's "plurality of independent probe blocks" 50 and 60. However, the probe cards 5 are not "independent". They are clearly shown as physically attached to the performance board 3. Their respective lateral positions are fixed by the attachment to the board 3. Furthermore, their respective orthogonal positions, while variable by the respective actuators 4, are still fixed as determined by the position of the respective actuators. The probe cards 5 are not allowed to "float" (i.e., "wiggle" within a frame). Hence, they cannot be considered "independent" or "floating" as required by Applicant's claim 1.

The Examiner further seeks to equate Pietzschmann's performance

board 3 with Applicant's recited "probe block frame which floatably holds said plurality of independent probe blocks to allow each said independent probe block to independently float within said probe block frame relative to a predetermined position within said frame". First, the performance board 3 is a board that the probe cards 5 are physically and fixedly attached to. As described previously, the probe cards 5 cannot move laterally in any direction, and can be adjusted orthogonally only through actuation of the respective actuators 4. The probe cards 5 cannot move from their adjusted orthogonal position unless the actuator is activated to move them. The performance board 3 cannot be equated with a "frame which floatably holds said plurality of independent probe blocks to allow each said independent probe block to independently float within said probe block frame relative to a predetermined position within said frame" because nothing is allowed to "float". All probe cards are fixedly attached to the board 3 and cannot move unless actively actuated. The probe cards 5 do not "float" on the board 3 because they cannot "wiggle" in any direction. Therefore, Pietzschmann does not teach or suggest "a plurality of independent probe blocks" that "***independently float*** within said probe block frame relative to a predetermined position within said frame".

For the above reasons, Pietzschmann does not meet the limitations of Applicant's claim 1, including "a plurality of independent probe blocks each having a set of probes and/or receptacles that mate to a respective mating set of DUT receptacles and/or probes on said DUT" and "a probe block frame which floatably holds said plurality of independent probe blocks to allow each said independent probe block to independently float within said probe block frame relative to a predetermined position within said frame". Under 35 U.S.C. § 102, a claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. *Verdegaal Bros., Inc. v. Union Oil Co.*, 814 F.2d 628 (Fed. Cir.), cert. denied, 484 U.S. 827 (1987). Since Pietzschmann does not meet each and every limitation of Applicant's claim 1, per

Verdegaal Bros., Inc., supra, Pietzschmann cannot be used in formulating an anticipation rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

Barabi et al. does not make up for the deficiencies of Pietzschmann in meeting Applicant's Claim 1. Barabi does not teach or suggest any "floating" probe blocks. Accordingly, Barabi does not meet the limitations missing from Pietzschmann, including "a plurality of independent probe blocks each having a set of probes and/or receptacles that mate to a respective mating set of DUT receptacles and/or probes on said DUT" and "a probe block frame which floatably holds said plurality of independent probe blocks to allow each said independent probe block to independently float within said probe block frame relative to a predetermined position within said frame".

Accordingly, in view of the above, neither Pietzschmann nor Barabi, taken either alone or in combination, meets each and every limitation of Applicant's claim 1. Per *Verdegaal Bros., Inc., supra*, therefore neither Pietzschmann nor Barabi can be used in formulating an anticipation rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102. Furthermore, Pietzschmann and Barabi cannot even be combined to formulate an obvious-type rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the 35 U.S.C. § 102 rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn and that claim 1 is now in position for allowance.

b. Claims 2-6 and 11-17

Claims 2-6 and 11-17 each depend from independent base claim 1 and add further limitations. For at least the same reasons that Claim 1 is not shown, taught, or disclosed by the cited references, Claims 2-6 and 11-17 are likewise not shown, taught, or disclosed. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claims 2-6 and 11-17 should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that none of the references cited by the Examiner taken alone or in any combination shows, teaches, or discloses the claimed invention, and that Claims 1-6 and 11-17 are in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this amendment, or should the Examiner believe that it would further prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned directly.

Respectfully submitted,

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